

We are touched by the gospel and our lives are different!

By Mary Marcotte, Postlude Reporter

It was with the above affirmation that Ray Jones, Coordinator for Evangelism for the PC(USA), began his inspiring keynote presentation to commissioners. His message celebrated the good news of lives changed because prayerful people are stepping out of their comfort zones to follow the lead of the Holy Spirit and lavishly loving people into wholeness in the name of Jesus.

Ray reminded the assembly of Jesus' words, using Eugene Petersen's paraphrase – "Let me tell you why you are here. You're here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth. ... You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We're going public with this as public as a city on a hill."

Ray suggested three ways we can go about living into this charge.

We are to **Engage the Gospel**, knowing that as a follower of Jesus Christ, we have a story to tell of how our lives are changed because of him



– and that our stories of personal transformation are connected to the great story of scripture.

We are to **Engage Discipleship**, because this relational work of life-on-life mentoring is the engine that drives our ministry as we share faith and do justice.

We are to **Engage Mission**, helping us see it is all of us who are sent out on mission into the world, offering stories of Presbyterians figuring out what it means to follow Jesus in their own particular context.

He told the story of a church reaching out to Chinese doctoral and post-doctoral students – 80 young men and women proclaimed their faith and are baptized.

Of three dying congregations who took a prayer-bathed look at the needs of their community. They sold their buildings, moved into a storefront where they now worship and run a clinic through which they are connecting with their neighbors and sharing the sure hope of a life grounded in Christ's love.

Then there was the story of Tamara, a young woman who had it all and lost it but put her life together again in Jesus, thanks to the support of a group of Presbyterian women. Tamara answered a call to ministry, a call to pastor wounded and broken people living in a trailer park in California.

Ray Jones...continued on page 2

God is good; God is faithful!



Sitting beneath the cross in the resurrected sanctuary of Atascocita Presbyterian,* commissioners and visitors to the presbytery meeting were vividly reminded of God's bounteous goodness as they viewed the harvest table set before them.

**The church burned in 2001.*



Morning Worship was led by Moderator Casey Jones and 7 pastors from around the presbytery. Casey delivered a stirring sermon entitled "Are We Corporately Desperate for God?" in keeping with the year's theme of Revival. Explained Casey, "I am thinking about the decline in awareness of our absolute and desperate dependence upon God, the disappearance of the conviction that only God, not our own efforts and cleverness, can give us corporate life."

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Doors have continued to open for Tamara and her congregation, as hope and healing in Christ is making a real difference.

More stories poured out—of the young woman who was equipped to put her life together in a love that would never leave her, embodied by women who surrounded her with love and prayer.

Of the tattoo artist who opened his shop to the 60-80 young adults who gathered each week to pray and sing and be equipped to be a living testimony in their community.

Of the two young men who walked their neighborhood in deep prayer from 2:00-5:00 a.m. each day for six weeks, praying that the love of Christ be poured out on a very broken city filled with wounded and broken people.

We are already marked for this work, Jones reminded us. We are claimed and marked in the precious waters of baptism. And we can remember that there is nothing better or more frightening than a sent out people on mission in the world. Renewal just doesn't happen outside of discipleship. It grows out of the relationships that are less about information than an imitation of the life of the One who has redeemed us.

Resources

Videos and news stories telling transformation stories growing out of evangelism in the PC(USA) www.onethousandone.org, click on INSPIRE.

Free training resources at www.pcusa.org/engage

Purchase resources at www.pcusa.org. Click on Shop the Church Store

Morning Worship...cont. from page 1

Rev. Keatan King, New Covenant's most recently ordained



pastor, presided at the Table. The morning offering (\$2,000) will go the

Pastor Special Needs Fund. These funds are used to assist our pastors with short-term or emergency financial needs.

Casey's sermon is posted at www.pbjofnewcovenant.org.

Middle East Peace Overture passes

A proposed overture for the 221st GA in Detroit was presented on behalf of the session of Covenant PC, College Station, by RE Tim Hardy. The overture was passed by the presbytery with a voice vote.

The overture is an affirmation of the measures undertaken by the 220th GA in 2012 which asked for church institutions to consider investments in peace to work toward the end of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians rather than pursuing divestment, boycotts, and sanctions.

The overture also included encouragement to pursue a negotiated, secure two-state solution, expand interfaith dialog, and encourage Presbyterians to travel to the Holy Land. Finally, the overture asks for fair and consistent treatment and transparent accounting in the U.S. aid to Israel and Palestine.

A new rule requires any overture from a presbytery to have the concurrence by another presbytery before being considered by the General Assembly for action.

COM policy subject of floor debate

A point of controversy during the meeting was the new "COM Policy for Those Serving in Temporary Pastoral Relationships in the Presbytery of New Covenant." This policy was approved by the Committee on Ministry at its September meeting, after a first reading in August. The policy affects those serving as Interim Pastors, Stated Supply Pastors, Commissioned Ruling Elders, Parish Associates, or other temporary pastoral ministry positions.

A portion of the policy reads, "a temporary pastor is not to be involved in an action of the congregation to leave the PC(USA) either by initiating the action, supporting the action, otherwise encouraging the action, or becoming part of the discernment team for the congregation served by the temporary pastor." It also says, "If a session enters into official discussions regarding denominational affiliation during the tenure of a Temporary Pastor who serves as moderator, the COM will appoint an alternate moderator for the purpose of facilitating all discussions related to denominational affiliation."

A motion was made that the COM reconsider this particular policy at the earliest practical opportunity and report back to the presbytery at its next meeting. An amendment to that motion was offered that added "and to have a stay of the policy until the report in March."

The amendment passed; however, the amended motion failed on a close vote. As a result of the close vote, the leadership of the COM is considering how to respond to the request.

Candidate completes examination process

TE Melissa Krabbe, who completed her ordination exams by preaching a sermon before the presbytery and answering questions from the Committee on Examinations, has been called to Westminster PC in Galveston. She has been working there as a Ministry Associate until her ordination.

Melissa, a Candidate in the Foothills Presbytery, United Church of Canada,

received her MDiv from Erskine Seminary in South Carolina. She will be ordained and installed as Pastor of Westminster PC, Galveston, Nov. 16 at 1:00 p.m.

One of Melissa's pastimes is finding Biblical parallels reflected in the plots and themes of literature, movies, and television (yes, an English major!). Melissa and her husband Rob have 2 young adult daughters, who are living in South Carolina, and a son Tristan, age 16, who moved with them to Galveston.



2014

Stated Presbytery Meetings

The theme of the 2014 presbytery meetings will be "Making Disciples." RE John Jo will be the new Moderator.

Sat., Mar. 22 – Korean Central PC, Houston

Sat., July 19 – Covenant PC, College Station

Sat., Nov. 8 – Indian PC, Livingston

Welcome to New Covenant! New Faces and Old Friend

TE Paul Hooker is transferring from Presbytery of St. Augustine where he was Executive Presbyter and Stated Clerk for the presbytery in Jacksonville, Florida. He is serving on the faculty of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary and is the Director of Ministerial Formation and Advanced Studies at the seminary.

Paul's special interests in ministry are Ecclesiology & Polity and Biblical Studies. Paul received his DMin from Union Theological Seminary in Virginia and a PhD in Old Testament from Emory University in Atlanta, GA. He has served congregations in Georgia and Tennessee. He and his wife Pat have 2 married adult children, 3 grandchildren, and their dog Calder.

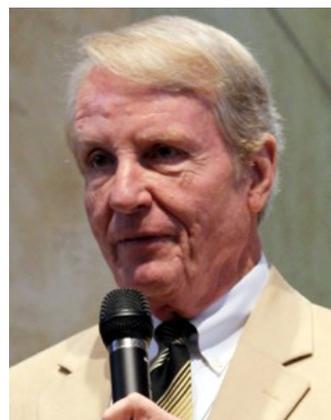


TE Shelley Craig (HR), transferring from Northern Kansas Presbytery, explained that coming to New Covenant is a really a homecoming for her. While attending Woodlands Community PC, she came under care as a Candidate. Shelley received her BA from Vanderbilt University, an MA from Peabody College in Massachusetts, and her MDiv from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Shelley has served churches in Indiana and Kansas. She is now retired and "back home!"



TE Howard Edington (HR) is currently serving as Interim Pastor at Memorial Drive Presbyterian, Houston. He retired from First PC, Orlando, Florida, after serving there for two decades.

Following his retirement, Howard served Providence PC in Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, and later was Preacher-in-Residence at Central PC in New York City. Howard and his wife, Trisha, have two adult daughters and three grandchildren.



TE Chelsea Chiu (Chiung-yuan Chiu) has been called to serve as pastor of Grace Taiwan PC, Houston, effective 2/1/14. She is transferring from the Presbyterian Church Taiwan. She earned her MDiv from Tainan Theological Seminary and her DMin from Taiwan Theological Seminary. Chelsea was not present at the meeting, as she has not yet moved to Houston.

Honorably Retired!

TE Pamela Morgan was granted Honorably Retired status, effective Jan. 1, 2014. Pam addressed the presbytery with an amusing recitation of how “You know you old enough to retire when...” After presenting a certificate and gift to Pam, Mike Cole prayed and gave thanks for Pam, who was surrounded by her supporters from throughout the presbytery.



Pam attended Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, was ordained at MDPC, and earned a PhD in Educational Psychology at University of Houston. Pam served as Director of Therapy and Pastoral Care for Women’s Home (a halfway house in Houston); Parish Associate at St. Philip PC; Pastor of Indian PC in Livingston, Dean of The Institute of Pastoral Studies (TIPS), and Interim Pastor for a number of New Covenant churches, including St. Luke’s PC, Houston, and Trinity PC in Port Neches. Teaching, writing, and technology have been special passions in Pam’s life.

In retirement Pam plans to continue her webmaster work and enjoy her pets and their antics. Godspeed, Pam!

Overture concurrence

All overtures to General Assembly from other presbyteries will be posted on the Stated Clerk page of the presbytery website (<http://www.pbyofnewcovenant.org>). Sessions are encouraged to read them to decide whether or not to bring any overture before the presbytery to send on to General Assembly.

For an overture to get to GA 2014, it needs to come before the presbytery no later than the March 22 meeting at Korean Central PC, Houston. This means it must get to the Ecclesiastical Affairs Committee **by Feb. 10, 2014.**

Postlude is published after each Stated Meeting.

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CODA

Elder and minister commissioners received the following announcements and conducted the following additional business:

- Approved the Proposed Minimum Terms of Compensation.
- Approved the proposal from Synod of the Sun to change the terms of commissioners from 2 to 3 years. There will be 2 commissioners representing our presbytery - 1 teaching elder and 1 ruling elder.
- Received the plan on parity between Ruling Elder and Teaching Elder representation at presbytery meetings.
- Received the information that Grace Presbyterian, Houston, has voted to enter into the Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Process.
- Endorsed Freedom Place, a ministry that works with victims of human trafficking, as the recipient of the PW “Thank Offering.” Approved 80+ names of those who were nominated to serve on committees of the presbytery.
- First PC, Somerville, has been dissolved; its last 2 members have died. The property has been sold.
- The congregation of St. Giles PC, Houston, has been dissolved. The church property was given to Pathways Church of Houston and other assets have been distributed.
- The building of Westminster PC, Houston, has been sold to Spanish United Pentecostal Church of Houston. The congregation is seeking a new location.
- TE Judy Liljestrand, HR, has transferred to Mission Presbytery.
- Candidate for ordination Sally Wright (Covenant PC, College Station) has been called as a chaplain to the Heart Hospital of Austin in Mission Presbytery.
- Candidate for ordination Victor Harris (St. Andrew’s PC, Houston) has been called to serve as pastor of Heritage PC in Carol Stream, IL.
- Approved closing the Associate Pastor position at Grace PC, Houston, formerly held by TE Jane Pettit.
- Christyn Soland (Memorial Drive, Houston) and Allison Purves (Atascocita PC) have been enrolled as Inquirers.
- Mike Allison (First PC, Texas City) has been enrolled in the Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) process.
- TE Victor Dindot is serving as Parish Associate at First PC, Navasota.
- TE Belinda Koenig is now serving as Parish Associate at Pines PC, Houston.